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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/823,195

04/12/2004

Wayne Clifton Augustus Wright

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, XUAN LAN T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3683

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PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/823,195	<b>Applicant(s)</b> WRIGHT ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Lan Nguyen	<b>Art Unit</b> 3683	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 November 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 22,23,25-32,34-39 and 54-63 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22,23,25-32,34-39 and 54-63 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/581,378.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                        | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 22, 23, 25-32, 34-39 and 55-59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rowe (USP 5,295,760) in view of Evans.

Re: claims 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 38, 39, 55, 56 and 57, Rowe shows a fitting, as in the claimed invention, said fitting comprising: a tubular sleeve 12 passing through the opening of wall 58 of a petroleum man hole with pipe 60 passing through said sleeve; a rigid, flat and planar flange 28 extending radially from said sleeve, a first surface of the flange being configured to seal the chamber wall around substantially the whole circumference of the opening and over substantially the whole first surface of the flange; wherein said sleeve is extending only on one side of said flange, said fitting being adapted to be positioned on one side said wall as shown. Rowe's fitting employs gasket 14 to seal the fitting to the wall. Claim 22 requires the flange's first surface to be directly contacting the chamber wall and a seal using electric current to cause the flange and the wall to fuse together. Evans teaches in figure 4 energy transfer means 24, 26, 21 for conducting an electric current; where 21 is the heating wire being embedded in

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the first surface of flange 16 therefore providing the first surface of flange 16 to be directly contacting the wall of cylinder 12 causing the wall and the flange to fuse together; and 24, 26 are the terminals. Evans further teaches in the Abstract the material for use as a heat activated adhesive to be a thermoplastic material. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated Evans teaching of the use of a thermoplastic material being activated by a current to provide a tight adhesion between the flange and the wall of Rowe's system; since heat activated thermoplastic materials are well known to provide a uniform and excellent fluid and gas sealing means as taught by Evans. Note that Rowe shows that the fitting is to be used in an underground fuel storage (or subterranean) the same as being recited in the preambles of claims 38 and 39.

Re: claims 28, Rowe shows the sleeve is of a circular cross section and the flange is radial.

Re: claims 30 and 31, Rowe shows sealing member 22 to be resilient and is providing a fluid tight connection between the sleeve 12 and the pipe 60 wherein sealing member 22 is mounting over the extension of the tubular sleeve 12.

Re: claims 32, 34-37, 58 and 59, Rowe shows a method of forming a seal between an opening in an underground (or subterranean) chamber wall of a subterranean fuel tank and manhole and a pipe passing through said opening, as in the present invention, the method comprising the steps of: applying a fitting to the pipe, said fitting comprising: a tubular sleeve 12 passing through the opening with pipe 60 passing through said sleeve; a rigid, flat and planar flange 28 extending radially from

said sleeve, a first surface of the flange being configured to seal the chamber wall around substantially the whole circumference of the opening and over substantially the whole first surface of the flange; wherein said sleeve is extending from only one side of said flange, said fitting being adapted to be positioned on one side of said wall; applying a sealing member 22 to form a fluid tight connection between the sleeve and the pipe. Rowe's method provides a seal with gasket 14. Claim 32 requires a sealing step wherein the flange's first surface to be directly contacting the chamber wall and a seal using electric current to cause the flange and the wall to fuse together with electric current. Evans teaches in figure 4 energy transfer means 24, 26, 21 for conducting an electric current; where 21 is the heating wire being embedded in the first surface of flange 16; therefore providing the first surface of flange 16 to be directly contacting the wall of cylinder 12 causing the wall and the flange to fuse together; and 24, 26 are the terminals. Evans further teaches in the Abstract the material for use as a heat activated adhesive to be a thermoplastic material. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated Evans teaching of the use of a thermoplastic material being activated by a current to provide a tight adhesion between the flange and the wall of Rowe's method; since heat activated thermoplastic materials are well known to provide a uniform and excellent fluid and gas tight sealing means as taught by Evans.

3. Claim 54 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gavin (USP 5,655,564) in view of Evans.

Re: claim 54, Gavin shows a fitting 130 for providing a substantially fluid-tight seal between an opening in an underground (or subterranean) chamber wall 102 and a pipe 156 passing through said opening, as in the present invention in figures 7- 11, said fitting comprising: a tubular sleeve 146 passing through the opening with pipe 156 passing through said sleeve; a rigid, flat and planar flange 140 extending radially from said sleeve, a first surface 138 of the flange being configured to directly contact the chamber wall around substantially the whole circumference of the opening and over substantially the whole first surface of the flange; an energy means ... to heat the first surface of the flange in order to form a substantially fluid tight seal between the wall and the flange, column 6, lines 44-46; wherein said sleeve is extending from both sides of said flange, said flange can be positioned either outside or inside of said wall, see figures 7-11. Note the phrase "for use" in the preamble is considered as an intended use only. Gavin's fitting is capable of being adapted to providing a seal as claimed. Gavin's fitting is silent of an energy transfer means. Evans shows in figure 4 energy transfer means 24, 26, 21 for conducting an electric current; where 21 is the heating wire being embedded in the first surface of flange 16; therefore providing the first surface of flange 16 to be directly contacting the wall of cylinder 12 causing the wall and the flange to fuse together; and 24, 26 are the terminals. Evans further teaches in the Abstract the material for use as a heat activated adhesive to be a thermoplastic material. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated Evans teaching of the use of a thermoplastic material being activated by a current to provide a tight adhesion between the flange and

the wall of Gavin's system; since heat activated thermoplastic materials are well known to provide uniform and effective fluid tight sealing means as taught by Evans.

4. Claims 60, 61, 62 and 63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rowe (USP 5,295,760) in view of Evans and further in view of Carlesimo.

Re: claim 60, Rowe shows a method of forming a seal between an opening in an underground (or subterranean) chamber wall of a subterranean fuel tank and manhole and a pipe passing through said opening, as in the present invention, the method comprising the steps of: applying a fitting to the pipe, said fitting comprising: a tubular sleeve 12 passing through the opening with pipe 60 passing through said sleeve; a rigid, flat and planar flange 28 extending radially from said sleeve, a first surface of the flange being configured to seal the chamber wall around substantially the whole circumference of the opening and over substantially the whole first surface of the flange; wherein said sleeve is extending from only one side of said flange, said fitting being adapted to be positioned on one side of said wall; applying a sealing member 22 to form a fluid tight connection between the sleeve and the pipe. Rowe's method provides a seal with gasket 14. Claim 60 requires the first surface of flange to be directly contacting the wall of the chamber causing the wall and the flange to fuse together and a sealing step with electric current. Evans teaches in figure 4 energy transfer means 24, 26, 21 for conducting an electric current; where 21 is the heating wire being embedded in the first surface of flange 16 therefore providing the first surface of flange 16 to be directly contacting the wall of cylinder 12 causing the wall and the flange to

fuse together; and 24, 26 are the terminals. Evans further teaches in the Abstract the material for use as a heat activated adhesive to be a thermoplastic material. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated Evans teaching of the use of a thermoplastic material being activated by a current to provide a tight adhesion between the flange and the wall of Rowe's method; since heat activated thermoplastic materials are well known to provide a uniform and excellent fluid and gas tight sealing means as taught by Evans. Rowe shows the tubular sleeve extending only on one side of the flange while claim 60 requires the sleeve to extend from both sides of the flange. Carlesimo teaches in figures 2, 5, 7 and 8 that for a fitting, having the sleeve to extend either on one side or both side, is a matter of preference and would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Rowe's sleeve to extend from both sides of the flange as a matter of preference.

Re: claims 61-63, Rowe shows a fitting, as in the claimed invention, said fitting comprising: a tubular sleeve 12 passing through the opening of wall 58 of a petroleum man hole with pipe 60 passing through said sleeve; a rigid, flat and planar flange 28 extending radially from said sleeve, a first surface of the flange being configured to seal the chamber wall around substantially the whole circumference of the opening and over substantially the whole first surface of the flange; wherein said sleeve is extending only on one side of said flange, said fitting being adapted to be positioned on one side said wall as shown. Rowe's fitting employs gasket 14 to seal the fitting to the wall. Claims 61-63 require the first surface of flange to be directly contacting the wall; and a seal



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using electric current causing the wall and the flange to fuse together. Evans teaches in figure 4 energy transfer means 24, 26, 21 for conducting an electric current; where 21 is the heating wire being embedded in the first surface of flange 16; therefore providing the first surface of flange 16 to be directly contacting the wall of cylinder 12 causing the wall and the flange to fuse together; and 24, 26 are the terminals. Evans further teaches in the Abstract the material for use as a heat activated adhesive to be a thermoplastic material. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated Evans teaching of the use of a thermoplastic material being activated by a current to provide a tight adhesion between the flange and the wall of Rowe's system; since heat activated thermoplastic materials are well known to provide a uniform and excellent fluid and gas sealing means as taught by Evans. Rowe shows the tubular sleeve extending only on one side of the flange while claim 60 requires the sleeve to extend from both sides of the flange. Carlesimo teaches in figures 2, 5, 7 and 8 that for a fitting, having the sleeve to extend either on one side or both side, is a matter of preference and would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Rowe's sleeve to extend from both sides of the flange as a matter of preference. Note that Rowe shows that the fitting is to be used in an underground (or subterranean) fuel storage the same as being recited in the preambles of claims 61 and 62.

***Response to Arguments***

5. Applicant's arguments filed 11/19/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

- Applicant argues that Rowe teaches away from welding the entrance fitting to the chamber wall. Rowe expresses that welding and simple gasket seals have often failed in the past. This did not prevent Rowe to invent a better gasket seal as shown in Rowe's patent. The same reasoning could be used for welding. Although Rowe expresses that welding often fails. This would not prevent a person of ordinary skill in the art to look for better welding materials and methods to accomplish the task of sealing the entrance fitting to the chamber wall. Evans teaches just that, a better welding material of thermoplastic material, and a better method of welding by electrofusion. Hence, the combination of Rowe in view of Evans is still deemed proper because applying a known technique to a known device to yield predictable results would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention.
- Applicant also argues that Gavin does not show a subterranean box because the grate 110 would be at ground level. It is believed that the box is underground and, therefore, it is a subterranean box with subterranean chamber walls while the grate is not.
- Applicant also argues based on the Declarations from James Thompson and John Boudry. Applicant further states that these Declarations have not been signed and that signed copies will be submitted for consideration at the latter

date. To date, the signed copies of the Declaration of the James Thompson and John Boudry have not been received.

- For these reasons, the rejections are still deemed proper and are repeated above.

### ***Conclusion***

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lan Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-7121. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Siconolfi can be reached on (571) 272-7124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Xuan Lan Nguyen/ 2/7/08  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3683